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**Florida Domestic Partnerships Act Introduced  
Representative Mark Pafford Sponsors House Bill 139**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** -- A bill that would provide domestic partnership protections to committed couples throughout Florida has been filed in both chambers of the legislature. State Representative Mark Pafford (D- West Palm Beach) filed the Domestic Partnerships Act (House Bill 139) on Monday in the House.

The filing comes as more local municipalities have adopted these vital workplace protections that are often the only means for gay couples to get health care benefits.

"It is only sensible that we do all we can to attract and retain the best and brightest to work in Florida and to grow businesses here," said Representative Pafford. "By recognizing domestic partnerships, we will take a leap forward in improving our economy and the manner in which our residents are treated. It makes good economic sense, it is sound personnel policy, and it is the right thing to do."

Nearly 60 percent of Fortune 500 companies and a majority of Florida's universities offer domestic partner benefits in order to attract and retain the best and brightest employees. The Domestic Partnerships Act would grant individuals in a domestic partnership the same benefits and responsibilities currently available through marriage.

The Senate version of the bill, SB 166, is sponsored by Senator Eleanor Sobel (D-Hollywood).

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